



BISHOP CHATARD HIGH SCHOOL

FAQs about Sophomore Christian Service

Who am I serving?

Sophomore year you perform DIRECT Christian service hours in your faith community.

Why am I serving my faith community?

The population you serve corresponds to the curriculum in your religion class. Sophomore year you study the Paschal Mystery and ecclesiology. Learning about the early Christian communities founded by the disciples and the Church which continues to serve through missionary discipleship corresponds to the enactment of the principles you learn through your Christian service hours. You are serving those in your own faith community to help bring about the Reign of God on earth.

What does it mean to do DIRECT service?

It means you are interacting face-to-face with the members of your faith community. You are building relationships with those you are serving.

What are some examples of service I could do for my Christian service hours?

- Religious Education -- many faith communities offer classes and camps for the youth in the community.
- Liturgical Ministries at your parish -- such as altar serving, choir, cantoring, ushering, lectoring, etc. This may be used to account for up to 7 of your total hours. The other 8 hours must be done within another ministry of your parish.
- Babysitting during events at the faith community so that parents can attend meetings, classes, or religious groups.
- Leading (not just participating in) Youth Group meetings

Can I file papers in the church office? What about fundraising?

No. While this is service, it is NOT direct service. You are only indirectly helping the faith community.

How do I know if my position qualifies for my required hours?

If you are getting paid, it does NOT count. The required Christian service hours are volunteer (i.e., free). If you are simply taking the place of a paid employee, the hours will not count. If you

need clarification, see the Director of Campus Ministry and they will help you determine if your service will qualify.

How many hours do I need?

15 hours.

Must I complete them all at the same service placement and ministry?

Yes. All Christian service hours need to be completed at the same site, with the same ministry, and same supervisor. For example: if you agree to serve as a teacher in your parish's Religious Education Program, then you will complete all 15 hours teaching religious education. However, if you choose to help with a liturgical ministry (i.e., lectoring, altar serving, etc.), you can receive up to 7 hours of service for that. We ask that you complete the other 8 hours at one other ministry in your parish (soup kitchen, annual social, vacation bible school, etc.).

Why?

Not only does it require a significant amount of time to build relationships, you are also making a commitment to the faith community. Bishop Chatard has high standards for students honoring their commitments, and your local parish will continue to feed you spiritually after graduation from BCHS.

What if there is a problem at my service site – can I switch?

Any potential switching of faith communities MUST be approved by Campus Ministry. Only certain rare circumstances justify switching once you have made a commitment. For example, if the faith community is not providing you with DIRECT service opportunities, then you may switch to ensure you fulfill your requirement.

Who is my site supervisor? Must I have the same "site supervisor" for the entire year?

- Your site-supervisor is the person you will check-in with every time you serve. They are a member of your faith community who is not a parent or family member.
- You should have the same site supervisor all year. This person will verify your hours each time that you serve.

May I complete them over the summer prior to my sophomore year?

Yes. The site must be pre-approved by Campus Ministry. A signed Summer Service Agreement Form must be completed prior to beginning the service at the end of the current school year. The service hour log sheet must be submitted to Campus Ministry on the first day of school in the fall. If you fail to finish your hours or to complete the essay by then, you will be required to start over.

May I split my hours between the summer and during the school year?

No. Hours must be completed in the summer OR during the school year. No combinations will be accepted.

What if I serve more than my required hours?

There are two additional categories in MobileServe that will count toward your total service hours during your time at BCHS: "Campus Ministry" and "Other". "Campus Ministry" hours are service hours gained through participation in the Campus Ministry Team (Peer Ministry, Retreat Leading, and Liturgy Core Team). "Other" hours include if you participate in service outside of your sophomore year commitment. You can also log additional liturgical ministry hours in "Other" after you have maxed out your 7 hours that count toward your sophomore year requirement.

Why would I want to record those?

"Campus Ministry" and "Other" hours DO NOT count toward your sophomore year goal of 15 hours in your faith community. However, they will be recorded on your transcript, and colleges will know that you went above and beyond what is required in terms of serving the community. If you complete 75 hours of total service (i.e., at least 15 hours of sophomore service in addition to 60 more hours) this year, you will be eligible for the St. Theresa of Calcutta Distinction. If you complete more than 150 hours by graduation, you will be eligible for the St. Lawrence Christian Service Honor Cord.

What if I don't have a faith community right now?

There are 2 options:

- You can elect to reach out to a faith community and establish a relationship and complete your Christian service hours through that faith community.
- You can partner up with a friend who has a faith community already and complete your Christian service hours through their faith community.

How do I get my Christian Service Agreement signed?

- **DO:**
 - Politely call and ask for an appointment to talk or meet with the Volunteer Coordinator or other person in a position of management.
 - Leave a message if no one answers with your name, contact info, and reason for calling. Show up to an appointment on time and well dressed.
 - Ask what volunteer opportunities are available.
 - Show your enthusiasm for serving your faith community.

- Ensure they have 15 hours of service available for you. Ask when and how often you can serve.
- Ask for a full-time employee to be your supervisor (not a family member), who can verify the hours once you've completed them.
- **DO NOT:**
 - Demand a meeting.
 - Have your parents call or set up meetings for you.
 - Ask a parent to be your supervisor, even if they work at the faith community.
 - Show up late or disheveled to appointments.
 - Hand over the form without explaining the purpose of your interest in serving.
 - Use the lack of a call back as an excuse not to turn in your form.

How should I conduct myself at my placement site?

- **DO:**
 - Show up when you sign up.
 - Be courteous and follow instructions from staff.
 - Log your hours in MobileServe immediately following your service.
- **DO NOT:**
 - Fail to show up at your scheduled time for volunteering without calling and letting the organization know. They are counting on you.
 - Wait until the last minute to complete your hours.
 - Log all your service hours at the last minute.

How do I go about finding a service opportunity for the year within my faith community?

Go on the church's website and peruse the ministries, events, and offerings. Find a ministry that you might be interested in or that really needs more help! For example, if you are interested in being a doctor, check to see if they offer a blood drive or offer small medical services at the homeless ministry. Take a step out of your comfort zone! If you see a ministry that might be new or challenging for you, give it a try! Many parish ministries often need extra help because of the service they do. Being a member of a community means that we sometimes need to stretch ourselves and serve in areas that might not be the most desirable. This may be a great way to learn and serve in a new way! Contact either the person listed on the website, or you can always call the parish office and ask to speak to the receptionist or the youth minister. They may be able to direct you to a parish ministry that needs assistance.

How do I go about starting my Christian Service?

1. Research potential Christian Service opportunities in your faith community.

2. Contact a member of your faith community who would be your site supervisor while serving to see if you can serve in that way.
3. Complete the Christian Service Agreement Form found on the BCHS Campus Ministry page and have it signed by you, your parent/guardian, and site supervisor.
4. After being approved, begin your Christian Service. Have your site supervisor sign your hourly log sheet.

What about the Christian Service Immersion (CSI) trips?

Campus Ministry is excited to announce that we will be hosting different CSI trips throughout the year. These trips will allow students to understand the true meaning of poverty, service, and solidarity as we do a deep dive into communities both near and far from BCHS. On CSI trips, students will participate in different kinds of service during the first part of the day, experience community in the afternoons, and practice theological reflection in the evenings.

Why should I attend a CSI trip?

In addition to being a worthwhile formational experience and a lot of fun, the CSI trips will meet the requirement for junior and senior year (i.e., if you are a junior, it will fulfill your junior year service hour requirements)! Further, if you wish to attend an international CSI trip (ex. El Salvador) in the future, you must first attend a domestic trip.

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